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GOLDWATER: NO REBUKE OF HELMS
RALEIGH, NC

Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Barry Goldwater, R-Ariz., says Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C. apparently has not disclosed secret information from the committee's files.

Goldwater told the Raleigh, N.C., News and Observer Friday he did not rebuke Helms in a letter concerning statements Helms made about covert United States involvement in elections in El Salvador.

"'Nobody has rebuked him,'" Goldwater said.

In a May 8 speech on the Senate floor, Helms said the Central Intelligence Agency had secretly aided the presidential campaign of moderate Jose Napoleon Duarte, who defeated rightist Roberto d'Aubuisson in El Salvador's May 6 election.

Goldwater said he disagreed with some of Helms' criticism of U.S. covert activities, but he did not believe Helms disclosed any classified information from the intelligence committee's files.

An inquiry by the committee staff seems to support Helms' statements that information for his allegations came from radio broadcasts in El Salvador and from Helms' sources, Goldwater said.

"'Some of the material he had, we didn't have,'" Goldwater said.

Asked if he initially thought Helms had released classified material, Goldwater said, "'Let me put it this way: we wondered where the hell he got it.'"

Helms is not a member of the committee, but as a senator, he has access to its secret files.

News stories published this week said Goldwater and Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan, D-N.Y., the committee co-chairman, wrote a letter to Senate leaders reportedly rebuking Helms for disclosing classified information in violation of Senate rules.

Goldwater said the letter, which is classified, was an attempt to combat recent public disclosures about intelligence operations in Central America.

"'This whole area of Central America has been one long, continuous series of leaks,'" he said.

The controversy over Helms' statements prompted Senate Republican leader Howard Baker and Democratic leader Robert Byrd to write a letter advising senators to keep intelligence information secret, regardless of the source.

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